

May 15, 2007

The Honorable George W. Bush  
President of the United States  
1600 Pennsylvania Ave., NW  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Bush:

As border state governors, we deal with the real effects of immigration, legal and illegal, every day. Due to this reality, in 2005, seeing little or no action from the United States Federal Government to address the dire situation created by border bandits and drug lords, New Mexico and Arizona issued emergency declarations freeing up resources to tackle this violence and lawlessness along our shared border with Mexico. Today, almost two years later, much progress has been made to stem the flow of illegal immigration and protect our border communities; however, the fact remains that very little is being done at the federal level to find a permanent, workable solution to the underlying immigration problem in our country.

Recently, the violence and lawlessness has once again escalated along our border with Mexico, punctuated by brutal killings and retaliation murders impacting several New Mexico and Arizona border communities. Unfortunately, no real action is being proposed to curb this violent and dangerous situation.

Compounding this problem, we are also very concerned about the possibility that the Department of Defense and the Department of Homeland Security intend to reduce the National Guard presence along the border this summer—before completing the recruitment and training of additional Border Patrol agents promised to our states. The current force of 6000 would be cut in half to 3000 National Guard Members. We urge you to insist that the National Guard's presence be maintained at current levels unless and until the Border Patrol is staffed sufficiently to replace Guard troops on a one-to-one basis.

Additionally, on May 4, your office sent us a letter clarifying plans to construct fencing along certain portions of the border in relation to the Secure Fence Act passed last year by Congress. Under your initial proposal, the 370 miles of primary fence and 200 miles of vehicle barrier appear to be inadequate to accomplish the goals of the Secure Fence Act. A fence, particularly one that leaves more than 1,400 miles, or two-thirds of the border, unattended and

unsecured, would not have prevented the violence and murders near our border communities. We must also double the number of Border Patrol agents actually deployed on the border and increase the utilization of cross-border technologies like the recently-approved "virtual fence." This technology, by the way, is available now and can be operational quickly and will bolster public safety and security while facilitating legitimate trade and cargo.


Furthermore, at a time when violence is once again flaring up on our own border, it makes no sense for the United States State Department to empower a company to hire away as many as 120 veteran Border Patrol agents to serve as mentors to train Iraqis to guard their border. We should be focused on supporting our nation's security efforts along the Mexican and Canadian border instead of hampering CBP by sending our best agents to a war zone in Iraq.

We respectfully request that you reallocate the funds for border agents and security technology.

Sincerely,



Bill Richardson  
Governor of New Mexico



Janet Napolitano  
Governor of Arizona

BR/JN/mw